

HARIJAN

16 Pages

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

VOL. XII. No. 22

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, AUGUST 1, 1948

TWO ANNAS

NOTES

In Memoriam

Today, Sunday the 1st of August, may be remembered as the day of Lokamanya Tilak's death as also of the launching of the non-cooperation movement by Gandhiji in 1920.

Wardha

Thanks

I thank various correspondents and institutions for kindly supplying me with information and copies of Sanskrit periodicals. I have received sufficient material and shall not need any more.

Wardha, 16-7-'48

Bombay's Reply

I am glad to publish the following from the Minister for Prohibition, Bombay Government, in reply to my enquiry:

"Regarding the issue of special permits to Indian Officers to possess foreign liquor. This Government has neither introduced nor have I countenanced any such system as mentioned by you. On the contrary, prohibition regulations have not only been made equally binding but more strict so far as Government officers are concerned. From time to time circulars are issued impressing upon them the imperative necessity of abstaining from drink in order that they should set an example to the general public.

"You will thus find that in this Province the case is just the reverse of what is indicated in your letter."

I hope the Madras Government as also other Governments, if any, will see their way to rectify their methods.

Wardha, 15-7-'48

Nothing to Find Fault with

A correspondent has sent me a facsimile copy published in a Bengali daily of a confidential circular issued from the Police Department of Ranchi to its subordinate officers asking for full reports of the activities of some workers and sympathizers of the agitation for inclusion of borders of Bihar in West Bengal, who have been named. The purpose of sending it to me is, obviously, that I should adversely comment upon it.

But I do not think that there is anything objectionable in this. I think it is part of the functions of the Police Department to obtain information and keep notes of every movement,

lawful or unlawful, whether favourable or unfavourable to government or any section of the people, within its jurisdiction. The important thing is that the police do not interfere with the movement as long as it is carried on peacefully and lawfully. As there is every possibility of a movement, even if originally carried on in a peaceful and constitutional manner, transgressing these limits, the police departments must always have ready information regarding it. Thus, even if there is a movement for making an organized effort to collect the entirely Government-recognized Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Fund in a *tahsil*, the police ought to know about it.

Such circulars are confidential only in the sense that they are not meant for those outside the department. They are not secret between a few individual officers.

Wardha, 20-7-'48

Not the Price of Freedom

Referring to Shri Bhansali's fast, a patriotic lady writes:

"Women's honour seems to be the price God is demanding for our freedom."

I beg to differ. It is not the price which *God* is demanding but the exaction which *Satan* is extorting. If the fair price of wheat is four annas a lb. but you pay a rupee for it because the grain dealer will not sell it for less, a rupee is not the price which a good merchant is demanding of you, but it is the illegal exaction of a black-marketeer. The dishonouring of women is even worse than that, for willingly or unwillingly you consent to pay the black-marketeer's demand, but here there is no question of the consent or otherwise of the ravished woman and also no reference to freedom whatsoever. These are grave inhuman crimes and it would be a mistake to ease our conscience by thinking that it is a part of the price of freedom. Sadism must be resisted with all our strength and *tapasya*.

Wardha, 20-7-'48

The Yarn Condition

In the course of a note published in the *Khadi Jagat* of the current month, the Secretary of the A. I. S. A. thus clarifies the position regarding the raising of the yarn condition:

(1) The resolution of the A. I. S. A. is not obligatory but only permissive. Any institution not willing to raise the yarn condition is at perfect liberty to retain it. The A. I. S. A. itself has not

raised it in its own *bhandars*. It believes that the yarn condition is indispensable for the progress of *khadi*, and without it it would be impossible to meet the demand for it. It thus welcomes those institutions, who insist on retaining the yarn condition. The condition has been raised for the ultimate conversion of those *khadi*-lovers who have not yet realized the necessity of becoming *charkha*-lovers too, and make a grievance of not getting *khadi* without spinning.

(2) The A. I. S. A. would like to warn those certified institutions who have retained the yarn condition, not out of faith in its necessity, but in the hope that the retention would enable them to get *khadi* stocks from the A. I. S. A. This expectation will lead to disappointment. The A. I. S. A. is rapidly organizing itself for a purely self-sufficiency programme. It will not be in a position to supply any stock to other institutions. Those institutions which wish to retain the yarn condition must therefore do so on their own faith in the yarn condition and on their strength to supply themselves with the necessary stock.

Some certified institutions have opened two branches in their *bhandars*, in one of which *khadi* is sold subject to the yarn condition and in the other, for all cash. The first is maintained in the hope above referred to. As stated above, it is a wrong expectation, and it has been decided that the A. I. S. A. should stop the supply of *khadi* to those institutions immediately.

No Marriage within Caste

A worker writes:

"Your editorial article in the *Harijan* dated 27th June, 1948 has to be read with Swami Anand's article in the same issue: *How to Abolish Caste?* Caste preserves the provincial culture of its origin for centuries. I am a Telugu in Tamil Nad; my forefathers settled here centuries ago. If there were no caste, my Telugu origin could not even be traced today.

"Abolish caste and the domiciled population gets absorbed in a few generations. But is caste going to die? I am afraid it will stick on and see to the utter destruction of this country, if we of this revolutionary generation do not immediately take to inter-caste marriage on a nation-wide scale. Inter-caste marriage is but the beginning of the great movement for the dissolution of caste.

"Let the Sarvodaya Samaj rule all *Sa-jati* (intra-caste) marriages out of order among its members; in other words, one of the terms of membership in the Samaj should be that a member will not marry in his or her own caste.

"Will you give a lead in such unequivocal terms?"

There have been several periods in the history of mankind, when a wave of mixed marriages has followed a long period of marriages within restricted groups. We are at present passing through the stage, when mixed marriages have become a necessity of the times.

I have no authority to lay down any rule for the Sarvodaya Samaj, and unless its Executive Committee decides to change the scope of its Constitution, it is hardly possible for it to lay down any such rule as suggested.

This is a matter, in which he who believes has to show it by acting. Marriage is a difficult

problem. If it is a love marriage, it does not know restrictions, whether of inside caste or outside caste. If it is a negotiated marriage, so many factors enter into consideration that no exact rule can be laid down. All I can say, therefore, is that inter-caste, inter-communal and inter-provincial marriages deserve every encouragement.

Wardha, 5-7-'48

K. G. M.

Harijan Employees' Houses

With a view to tackling the question of housing Harijan employees of Local Bodies immediately and effectively, the Government of Bombay has done well in announcing certain concessions. The concessions will not apply to the Bombay Municipal Corporation.

The Government will consider the question of making a free grant of Government land for building quarters, if no suitable land in the ownership of the Local Body is available.

The Government will also pay subsidies at the rate of 33-1/3 per cent of the total cost, inclusive of the cost of the site in the case of Borough Municipalities and 50% of the total cost, inclusive of the cost of site in the case of District Municipalities, Village Panchayats, District Local Boards and Notified Area Committees and private individuals and bodies interested in the welfare of Harijans.

The collectors and executive engineers will give all possible help to Local Bodies or other agencies for obtaining the necessary building material.

The grant of free sites and payment of subsidies will be subject to certain conditions. P. M.

Invitation for Service

The Swaraj Ashram at Vedchhi (District Surat) is a growing institution and is in need of capable and sincere *Lok Sevaks*. The following activities are at present carried on at the Ashram:

1. Balwadi (pre-basic training school for the child).
2. Basic Education according to the *Nai Talim*.
3. Raniparaj (Local *adivasis*) Girls' School.
4. People's School (Post-Basic Education).
5. Gram Sevak Vidyalaya (school for training village workers).
6. *Nai Talim* Teachers' Training School.

Besides the above educational activities, it also interests itself in the economic and social problems of the Raniparaj *kisans* and labourers. The following activities are carried on for the purpose:

1. Centres for production of self-sufficiency *khadi* and all-round service of villages.
2. Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies.
3. Co-operative Societies for poor peasants.
4. Joint Co-operative Societies of peasants and labourers.
5. Raniparaj Peasants' Associations.
6. Halpati (Farm Labourers') Mahajan.

The Ashram invites young men and women who, besides being students of pedagogical subjects, social sciences, *khadi* technique, agriculture, physics, mechanics, sanitation and health are anxious to dedicate their lives to the service of the villager on Gandhian ideals and to labour for their own development by adopting Ashram life. Those interested are requested to get a copy of the latest report of the Ashram and, if attracted, to pay a personal visit to the Ashram.

Swaraj Ashram,
Vedchhi, Post Valod,
Dist. Surat, 1-7-'48

JUGATRAM DAVE

KASTURBA TRUST MEETING

The third ordinary Annual Meeting of the Trustees of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust was held on 27th June, 1948 in Bombay. The Vice-Chairman Shri G. V. Mavalankar presided.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was elected Chairman in the vacancy caused by the demise of Gandhiji, and his term of office was fixed till the next annual meeting.

Besides the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Secretary, who are ex-officio, the following members were elected to serve on the Executive Committee of the Trust for the year 1948-49, till the next Annual Meeting.

1. Smt. Ashadevi Aryanayakam
2. „ Goshiben Captain
3. „ Mridula Sarabhai
4. „ Sushila Pai
5. „ Promlila Thackersey
6. Shri Devadas Gandhi
7. „ Shrikrishnadas Jaju
8. „ Mangaldas Pakvasa
9. „ Shantikumar N. Morarjoo.

Smt. Shushila Pai was appointed as the permanent Organizing Secretary of the Trust.

The Trustees adopted the accounts and report of the Trust for the year 1947.

The following table shows the organization during the year:

	Training Centres	Working Centres	Candidates	
			Passed	Under training
Gramsevika	9	110	218	170
Basic	4	15	22	58
Balwadi	1	—	17	15
Midwifery	12	17	13	57
Leprosy Relief	—	1	—	—
Rest	—	—	19	10

These centres employed 242 women workers in villages including *gram-sevikas*, teachers, midwives, etc. but excluding helpers, etc.

1891 ante-natal and post-natal, and 81,238 outdoor cases were treated in the medical centres of the Trust and 1182 maternity and 52 indoor cases were treated during the year.

A sum of Rs. 4,13,887 was spent during the year. Till the end of 1947 Rs. 1,30,54,741 were collected as Trust fund, Rs. 9,68,929 were received as interest and Rs. 19,474 as local collections by branches. As against this, the Trust has so far spent Rs. 8,85,201 during the last three years.

The Executive Committee of the Trust met on the 26th and 27th June, 1948 and considered a number of schemes and budgets. Schemes of midwifery training at Raipur, Madura and Madras were sanctioned. The Executive Committee sanctioned a scheme of starting a Sevika Ashram at Rewari in the Punjab for 25 women, mostly widows. The Committee approved the schemes and budgets of starting 12 midwifery centres, 2 maternity hospitals, 29 *gramseva* and basic education centres.

The Committee also approved the schemes of starting *gram-sevika vidyalayas* for Karnatak and

U. P. and extension of *gram-sevika* and basic teachers' training in Andhra and Tamil Nad.

Wardha, 15-7-'48

SHYAMLAL

GANDHIJI ON LINGUISTIC REDISTRIBUTION OF PROVINCES

Continuing Gandhiji referred next to the proceedings of the Congress Working Committee, which had been sitting for the last two days. Gandhiji said that they had been discussing the question of re-constitution of provinces on a linguistic basis. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel were both present in that day's meeting. The Congress had already adopted that principle and had declared its intention to give effect to it constitutionally as soon as they come to power, as such redistribution would be conducive to the cultural advancement of the country. But such redistribution should not militate against the organic unity of India. Autonomy did not and should not mean disruption or that hereafter provinces could go the way they chose, independent of one another and of the Centre. If each province began to look upon itself as a separate, sovereign unit, India's independence would lose its meaning and with it would vanish the freedom of the various units as well.

The charter of India's independence as conceived by the Congress was based on village autonomy. But all the villages were to derive vitality from the Centre, as the latter in its turn derived all power and authority from the former. It would be fatal if it led to narrow provincialism, mutual bickerings and rivalries—between Tamil and Andhra for instance, Bombay and Karnatak and so on. The re-distribution of provinces on a linguistic basis was necessary if provincial languages were to grow to their full height. Hindustani was to be the lingua franca—*Rashtra Bhasha*—of India, but could not take the place of the provincial tongues. It could not be the medium of instruction in the provinces—much less English. Its function was to make them realize their organic relationship with India. The world outside did not know them as Gujaratis, Maharashtritis, Tamilians etc., but only as Indians. We must, therefore, resolutely discourage all fissiparous tendencies and feel and behave as Indians. Subject to this paramount consideration, a linguistic re-distribution of provinces should give an impetus to education and trade.

(From Post-prayer speech of Gandhiji on 25-1-1948 reported in the *Delhi Diary* pp. 378-9)

[Note—The above has been reproduced in response to the question of a respected Andhra leader asking me if my attitude towards formation of linguistic provinces is different from that of Gandhiji. I beg to reply that so far my attitude, for what it is worth, is the same as that in the above speech. But I have an open mind and can modify my attitude, if convinced. That also was Gandhiji's frame of mind.

— K. G. M.]

Wardha, 15-7-'48

HARIJAN

August 1

1948

EMOLUMENTS AND TITLES

Closely connected with the system of diarchy and acting as a feeder to the conflict between Congressmen in office and those outside is the emoluments of members elected to statutory bodies. The number of offices and seats in such bodies is necessarily more limited than the number of aspirants for it. Even if such positions were not economically profitable, indeed cost money, the prestige, respect and power accompanying them would be sufficient to make ambitious men aspire to get them. The aspirations are naturally greater when they are also economically profitable, as in the present system. Indeed, the salaries, allowances and other comforts accruing to legislators and other office-bearers have made these places almost as so many openings for profitable employment. Hence there is a keen competition for getting into these bodies, and with that end attempt is made to take advantage of every weak or soft spot in men's character. Thus, religion, community, caste, relationship, friendship, sex, passions, prejudices, superstitions, follies, slogans etc. of candidates or electors are put forth to prove that A has a better claim than B to a particular place.

Witnesses summoned in a case are also paid allowances for their trouble and time in attending the courts. But excepting purchasable persons and doctors and advocates who get handsome allowances for being summoned, it is not the experience that ordinary people welcome a court's invitation for giving evidence. Because, the experience is that ordinary witnesses have actually to pay out of their pockets in order to attend the court, and have besides to spend a day idly with no convenience even of a seat and are roughly treated by court officials. If however, every witness were paid something like Rs. 10 or 15 per day without discrimination, and while he was waiting to be called, could get a waiting or reading room with modern comforts, no person of the middle class or below would feel sorry to be called as a witness. In the same way if attendance to the Assemblies or committees etc., were not paid as sumptuously as it is at present and if the scale of remuneration of legislators were not so sufficient as to enable a middle class man to maintain his domestic establishment without doing other work, there would not be that rivalry which is seen at present.

The system of paying regular salaries to legislators was introduced, I believe in foreign countries, to enable leaders of the working and clerical or shopkeeper classes to take part in parliamentary activities. They cannot work both for bread and also for public work at the same time. But the scale of payment in that case should not be greater than what they would be able to get as average factory-

workers or clerks or small shopkeepers. I do not know what the scales in other countries are. But in India the scale of daily allowances is conceived not in terms of clerks, artisans or factory workers, but in those of I. C. S. officers, merchant-princes and first-class advocates and doctors. But legislators of this class are few and others are not used to and have no desire to live in that style. They are more interested in making a saving of their allowances and getting a good income out of it. This is making business out of public service. If the Congress or any other political organizations which aspire for power wish to do so for the fulfilment of some high ideals, these must be severely cut down.

Conferment of titles was not a good system. But it had one advantage. It cost little money to the tax-payer, and yet gave such satisfaction to the title-holder that he was willing to pay even high price for it. For instance, at one time three lakhs of rupees was spoken of as the price for knighthood. The knights had hardly any privileges, while the money which they donated was generally used for a public charity. Similarly (Rao or Khan) Sahebs and Bahadurs. These Sahebs and Bahadurs even worked as slaves at their own expense for the white Sahebs with lifelong gratitude for the titles conferred. Some of them might have made a profitable use of their titles in their economic activities also. But to a large number it was a mere satisfaction of their sense of vanity.

We have done away with the titles to a certain extent. I say to a certain extent advisedly. For it is only the Government titles that have been removed. Universities to a certain extent have taken up the function of conferring titles in the shape of honorary degrees and there is an increasing tendency to seek doctorates from them. It is difficult to know whether a D. Sc. or an LL. D. is so for one's special attainments in Science or Law or for one's high position in public life.

But university honours are still, yet rather difficult to get and confer. So men have invented another way of honouring their favourite leaders. It is through popular titles, such as Quaid-e-Azam, Mahatma, Lokamanya, Lokanayak, Lokasevak, Sardar, Vir, Karma-vir, Deshbandhu, Netaji, Sant, Tapasvi, Acharya, Deshbhakta, etc. In England a favourite leader would be honoured by the diminution of his name into Bob, Bill or Dick. In India, it would be regarded as discourteous. As with Government titles some of these have been spontaneous and highly deserved, while some are worked up.

The point is that the abolition of Government titles has not deprived men of other means of satisfying their appetite for honour. Birthday Jubilees and Commemoration Volumes are other items of the same category. The only loser is the public which has now to pay in cash for every public service or disservice rendered to it, and for bestowing such honours.

I do not mention all these points to suggest that Government should revive the system of conferring titles. Rather, Government should not

in official records and utterances use any title not given by itself in referring to a person and should deprecate such practice by the public. If a title is to be conferred at all, either as attached to an office or a personal honour, it should be done by Government itself. Universities should not confer degrees, which are obtainable by the general public only through examinations except for high proficiency in a particular branch of knowledge to a person actually working in that branch in its own jurisdiction. And it should be conferred only once. Is it not sufficient, say, that Dr. Radhakrishnan has once been conferred the degree of Ph. D., say by the Annamalai University or the Benares Hindu University? Why should other universities of India also seek to confer it again and again?

The public and the Press should also be more stingy in conferring such titles. All these practices spoil and corrupt public men and life and create jealousies and unhealthy rivalries. Hence both emoluments and conferment of honours should be severely diminished. Emoluments should not be such as to make positions covetable on economic grounds, and titles should not be conferred or recognized except in very rare cases. To give a concrete suggestion, I would say that either the Government should by an express resolution formally ratify even such widely recognized title as Sardar Patel or drop it in a pointed manner.

Wardha, 19-7-48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

LIMITATIONS OF HINDUSTANI ?

Shri Ghanashyam Sinhji Gupta, Speaker of the C. P. Legislative Assembly, sends the following note on the controversy of Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu. (The paragraphs have been numbered by me):

"In this note I would briefly discuss the question of Language in a dispassionate manner. The discussion of script may then become unnecessary.

1. I would define Hindustani as the language where Hindi and Urdu become one and not two, although no doubt the vocabulary of this Hindustani differs from region to region. In the Punjab and Delhi there would be more of Urdu words than say in C. P. In Chhatisgadhi there would be only a sprinkling of Urdu words. This Hindustani is the spoken language of those areas.

2. Owing to British domination English was the medium of higher education, of law courts, of business, and of many other things. Even the resolutions of the Congress were in English. Hindustani was, therefore, confined to subjects left over by English from its fields of activities, e. g. ordinary parlance, popular lectures and popular books. It served well for all ordinary purposes open to it. There was thus no occasion for any real controversy regarding Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu.

3. With our political independence things have changed. There is a natural desire to end the domination of the English language and replace it with our own. This necessitates a language or rather a vocabulary running into lakhs of words capable of replacing English in higher studies, in law and law courts and various other fields requiring clear

distinctions between fine shades of ideas in all branches of knowledge and administration; e. g. between pressure and compression, between chloride, chlorite and chlorate, between penalty, punishment and sentence, between receipt, recovery and realization and thousands of others.

4. This means our planning for the future generations and we must look to their facilities for development more than to our present conveniences and prejudices. Again, our terminologies should be such as are likely to be common to other languages of the Dominion of India, e. g. Marathi, Bengali, Telugu, all of which are either of Sanskritic origin or highly nurtured by Sanskrit. We have also to bear in mind that in many cases we have to choose such root words as would be capable of giving easily understandable derivatives and compounds, sometimes a long list of them. Then again our words must in most cases be meaningful, that is to say they must speak the meaning they are intended to convey. In other words they must be systematic and not empirical for every empirical word would be a dead weight on the memory and intelligence of our future students, however easy and convenient it may be to us today.

5. I have tried to give the barest analysis without burdening this short note with illustrations on each. I had occasions to see the working in framing the terminology for college books on sciences. I have also worked myself for my Assembly terms. All this has led me to the following conclusions:

(1) Hindustani (mixture of Hindi and Urdu, or if I may use a term of chemistry, solution of Hindi and Urdu) is and can remain the common man's spoken language. Its vocabulary is limited, I should assess it to less than 2000 words. It cannot be the language of higher studies, law or administration which requires a vocabulary running into lakhs. Any effort to expand it to meet the requirements will destroy it like the over-expansion of a rubber *fugga*. The only merit claimed for Hindustani, viz. its simplicity and mass comprehensibility will be gone. To make it look like Hindustani (mixture of Hindi and Urdu) you must introduce numberless words empirically and indiscriminately, one derived from Sanskrit and the other from Arabic or Persian. These latter will be new and difficult and being derived from Arabic or Persian, which unlike Sanskrit is not the mother of our languages, will bear no relation with our languages. They will be a dead weight on the memory of our future students and will imperceptibly but surely and constantly work to cripple their intelligence.

(2) If we bear in mind this limitation of Hindustani, it can become the national language of India in the sense of common man's spoken language.

(3) The language or rather the vocabulary of higher studies, of law and administration can be either:

(i) Hindi, with words derived and coined mostly from Sanskrit and Sanskrit roots, or

(ii) Urdu, with words derived mostly from Arabic and Persian, or

(iii) can continue to be English.

There is no other alternative. We must choose one of the three. It cannot then be denied that it must be Hindi.

6. I would end this note by repeating what I have said before that I have given the barest points without illustrating them, as I wanted to be brief knowing the value of the space in the *Harijan*."

I am grateful to Shri. Ghanashyam Sinhji Gupta for the brevity of his contribution. I regret I am unable to agree with several of his propositions and the final conclusions. Like him I must also content myself from just stating the points very briefly:

1. I doubt the correctness of the statement made in paragraph 2. So far as I am aware even during British rule, every enactment, order etc., was translated in Indian languages, documents were drawn, pleadings were made, writs of various kinds were issued in regional languages as well. Pleaders, and petition-writers, not knowing a word of English, carried on legal work through their own languages till recently. Some Indian States, for example, Baroda drafted laws in Gujarati. In various States, proceedings in the highest courts were recorded in Urdu or other State-recognized languages. Books on high scientific subjects are not altogether unknown in Indian languages.

2. The language controversy in U. P. is at least half a century old. Hindustani and Urdu (script) began to lose their place of importance from schools, colleges and technical and other literature with the growth of the propaganda for Hindi.

3. If we want a vocabulary running into lakhs of words, it is all the more necessary that we should not fall back upon a single old language like Sanskrit, or Arabic or Persian, but like the English language admit words from every quarter. English has grown because it has freely taken from both the ancient as well as modern languages of the world. Shri Guptaji has not hesitated to introduce the Indian word *fugga* (blow-toy) in his English article. But he would perhaps object to the use of the word "rubber", though used in all parts of India, in his new lexicon, and coin one from Sanskrit!

4. I doubt if it is correct to say that our modern languages like Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati are Sanskritic in origin. They have been highly nurtured by Sanskrit, I agree. But whether Sanskrit is their mother or rich aunt is a doubtful question. Be it as it may, this much can be said without fear of contradiction, that the modern spoken languages of India have everyone of them, drawn from several languages.

5. There is bound to be some difference in the scholarly and popular forms of a language. But there is no reason why there should be two different languages, or why the development of the scholarly language should be restricted to a single old stock. It would, indeed, be a strange scholarly language which coined all its lakhs of

words from one stock, while the people at large did so from several. Scholars have paid insufficient attention on discovering the latent capacities of spoken languages in their fascination for the old, whether Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian, Latin or Greek.

I am sorry to carry on this controversy and still more sorry to be unable to agree with such eminent scholar and leader as Shri Ghanashyam Sinhji Gupta.

Wardha, 29-6-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

FEAR, FAVOUR & CORRUPTION

The following extracts taken from the speech of Shri Dwarkaprasad Mishra, Minister for Local Self-Government, C. P. & Berar, at the Conference of Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners of the Province on the 28th of June, though made in special reference to that Province, are applicable to all:

FEAR

"Reports from the districts have been pouring in that M. L. A.'s and Congressmen hamper the efficient conduct of the administration, and that, more often than not, the District officers succumb to their pressure. I have been repeatedly told that there is a general belief amongst officers that because the Congress Ministry is in power, wishes of Congressmen, reasonable or unreasonable, must be respected, if the officer wishes to avoid trouble. I want to tell you in the most clear and unambiguous terms that this is not the correct attitude....

"You are all public servants, in name as well as in fact, and while it is your duty to serve the people as faithfully and efficiently as possible, it is not necessary that you should go out of your way to yield to the unreasonable demands of anybody whosoever he might be....

FAVOUR

"I have heard reports about some Congressmen who pose as being very 'chummy' with the Premier or a particular Minister and assure Government officials of promotion etc. if their personal work was done. I want to assure you in so many words that such a pose is a gross falsehood. No Congressman has any right to commit the Government, nor can he influence our decision, in regard to promotions etc. It is, therefore, not proper to attach any importance to such things....

"There are parties and intrigues in every district and it is only natural that interested parties would come to you and impress upon you their own view-points or importance. Your duty in such cases is to remain impartial and to do only what is just. You should neither be rude nor spineless.

CORRUPTION

"... I appeal to you in the name of the country to help us in waging a war against corruption and inefficiency. This is a war in which you, more than the Congressmen, can be our greater allies. Make it your own war and let us together, in a big co-operative endeavour, raise the standard of our administration to a pitch that may make us proud, and inspire others to do the same. It is your duty to convey this message of mine to all your subordinates and to see that corruption and inefficiency are rooted out from our province."

It is rather disconcerting to read that Shri Mishra has to say that his government is not in a position to look up to Congressmen for help in the task of putting down corruption.

Wardha, 6-7-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM OBSERVANCES IN ACTION

(By M. K. Gandhi)

[The latter part of the chapter on Truth appeared on page 160, the last page of *Harijan* of July 4, 1948. We now therefore pass on from Truth to Love. V. G. D.]

II AHIMSA OR LOVE

The greatest difficulties perhaps were encountered as regards the observance of *ahimsa*. There are problems of Truth, but it is not very hard to understand what Truth is. But in understanding *ahimsa* we every now and then find ourselves out of our depth. *Ahimsa* was discussed in the Ashram at great length than any other subject. Even now the question often arises whether a particular act is violent or non-violent. And even if we know the distinction between violence and non-violence, we are often unable to satisfy the demand of non-violence on account of weakness which cannot easily be overcome.

Ahimsa means not to hurt any living creature by thought, word or deed, even for the supposed benefit of that creature. To observe this principle fully is impossible for men, who kill a number of living beings large and small as they breathe or blink or till the land. We catch and hurt snakes or scorpions for fear of being bitten and leave them in some out-of-the-way place if we do not kill them. Hurting them in this way may be unavoidable, but is clearly *himsa* as defined above.

If I save the food I eat or the clothes I wear or the space I occupy, it is obvious that these can be utilized by some one else whose need is greater than mine. As my selfishness prevents him from using these things, my physical enjoyment involves violence to my poorer neighbour. When I eat cereals and vegetables in order to support life, that means violence done to vegetable life.

Surrounded thus as I am by violence on all sides, how am I to observe non-violence? Fresh difficulties are bound to arise at every step as I try to do so.

The violence described above is easily recognized as such. But what about our being angry with one another? A teacher inflicting corporal punishment on her pupils, a mother taking her children to task, a man losing his temper in his intercourse with equals, all these are guilty of violence, and violence of a bad type, which is not easy to tackle. Violence is there where there is attachment on the one hand and dislike on the other. How are we to get rid of it?

The first lesson therefore that we in the Ashram must learn is that although to sever some person's head from his body for the sake of the country or the family or oneself is indeed a violent act, the subtle violence involved in injuring the feelings of other people day in and day out is possibly very

much worse than that. Murders committed in the world will seem to be numerous when considered by themselves and not so numerous when compared with the number of deaths due to other causes; but the subtle violence involved in daily loss of temper and the like defies all attempts at calculation.

We are constantly striving in the Ashram to deal with all these kinds of violence. All of us realize our own weakness. All of us including myself are afraid of snakes for instance. We therefore as a rule catch them and put them out of harm's way. But if some one kills a snake out of fear, he is not taken to task. There was once a snake in the cowshed, but it was impossible to catch it where it was. It was a risky thing to keep the cattle there; the men also were afraid of working thereabouts. Maganlal Gandhi felt helpless and permitted them to kill that snake. I approved of his action when he told me about it. I believe that even if I had been there on the spot, I could not have done anything other than what he did. My intellect tells me that I must treat even a snake as my kinsman and at the risk of losing my life I must hold the snake in my hands and take it away from those who are afraid of it. But in my heart I do not harbour the necessary love, fearlessness and readiness to die of snake-bite. I am trying to cultivate all these qualities but have not still succeeded in the attempt. It is possible that if I am attacked by a snake, I may neither resist nor kill it. But I am not willing to place any one else's life in danger.

Once in the Ashram the monkeys made a terrible nuisance of themselves and did extensive damage to the crops. The watchman tried to frighten them by making a show of hurling stones from a sling but in vain. He then actually threw stones and injured and crippled one of the monkeys. I thought this even worse than killing it. I therefore held discussions with coworkers in the Ashram, and finally we took the decision that if we could not get rid of the monkeys by gentle means short of wounding them, we must kill one or two of them and end the nuisance. Before this decision was taken there was a public discussion in the columns of *Navajivan** which may be consulted by the curious.

No one outside India thinks that one should not kill even a violent animal. Some individuals like St. Francis observed this rule, but the common people did not, so far as I am aware. The Ashram believes in the principle, but it is a pity that we have not succeeded in putting it into practice. We have not still acquired the art of doing this. It is possible that many men will have to lay down their lives before this art is mastered. For the present it is only a consummation devoutly to be wished for. The principle has long been accepted in India but the practice is very imperfect on account of our laziness and self-deception.

Mad dogs are killed in the Ashram, the idea being that they die after much suffering and never

*Since reprinted in *Ahimsa*, p. 123 ff.

recover. Our people torture mad dogs instead of killing them and deceive themselves into thinking that they observe non-violence. As a matter of fact they only indulge in greater violence.

Non-violence sometimes calls upon us to put an end to the life of a living being. For instance a calf in the Ashram dairy was lame and had developed terrible sores; it could not eat and breathed with difficulty. After three days' argument with myself and my coworkers I had poison injected into its body and thus put an end to its life. That action was non-violent, because it was wholly unselfish in as much as the sole purpose was to achieve the calf's relief from pain. It was a surgical operation, and I should do exactly the same thing with my child, if he were in the same predicament.

Many Hindus were shocked at this, but their reaction to the incident only betrays their ignorance of the nature of *ahimsa*, which has for us long ceased to be a living faith, and has been degraded into formalities complied with when not very inconvenient.

Here we must take leave of the Ashram experiments with *ahimsa* as regards subhuman species.

(To be continued)

SATYAGRAHI'S WEAPON

Readers are now aware of the termination of Shri Bhansali's fast as a protest against what has become almost a world-wide practice in military or semi-military warfare, namely along with arson, loot, massacre, torture, etc. of innocent civilians, heartless ravishment and molestation of women.

Shri Bhansali had gone to Andhra to unveil Gandhiji's statue at a place near Bezwada. He received there the report of a raid by the Razakars in a village nearby and decided to see for himself what had happened. It was a painful sight. Apart from the devastations of fire and loot, he could not bear the sight of women, who had been profligately handled. One woman was raped as many as five times successively and her condition was very miserable. People were in a state of fear and panic and needed, besides consolation and immediate help, someone to put courage and the spirit of resistance in them. The sight of this village made Shri Bhansali visit other villages nearby on both the sides of the border. He found people living in constant dread, women running away from the village well as soon as they sighted a Razakar even at a distance, without caring to take away even their pots, ropes and at times even children with them.

After his first brief tour Shri Bhansali returned to Sevagram for a brief respite. He was to stay a little longer, but an urgent wire summoned him to Bezwada, and he left suddenly. Before his departure, I had an opportunity of having a talk with him. I confess, I was not much interested in criticizing the policy of the Indian Government in the matter.

The Government should be knowing the situation as well as we, and could be expected to act up when it felt proper. The Government action would necessarily be in terms of violent force. I wanted to know what we could do as pledged to non-violence and satyagraha.

"I am unarmed," Shri Bhansali then said, "without even a sheet of cloth on my chest, or *chappals* in my feet. I am told that I may be killed at any time and nobody might be able to discover how and when I was killed. My equipment is my preparedness for death, my goodwill for all including, in a sense, even the atrocious gangsters whose acts I hate, but for whom as human beings I have no ill-will, my determination to be always on the side of the weak and the victimized, and my firm faith in the Immortal One. I am not in a position to tell the people that I shall teach them drill or the wielding of even a simple thing like *lathi*. My physical weapons are the broom and the charkha. I use these regularly and for a considerable time of the day. Somehow they love me and hear me, and of course I love them and my heart is with them in their wretchedness. The mere presence of courageous volunteers in the border villages would put heart into the villagers."

He was right. Courage like cowardice is often catching. If a few people take to their heels at the sight of danger others follow suit, and their is disorderly flight. If a few march in face of danger and ask others to do likewise, they too get a good response. Arms are not essential for courage, for when fear takes possession of men, fully equipped armies are known to have fled helter-skelter before a number much smaller than their own. Years of drilling does not help.

When for reasons, for which the opposite party is responsible, this is made impossible, a situation for a fast as the last resort might arise.

Wardha, 22-7-'48

K. G. Mashruwala

CONTENTS	PAGE
KASTURBA TRUST MEETING ... SHYAMLAL	187
GANDHIJI ON LINGUISTIC REDISTRIBUTION OF PROVINCES	187
EMOLUMENTS AND TITLES ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	188
LIMITATIONS OF HINDUSTANI? ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	189
FEAR, FAVOUR & CORRUPTION ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	190
ASHRAM OBSERVANCES IN ACTION ... M. K. GANDHI	191
SATYAGRAHI'S WEAPON ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	192
INDEX : VOLUME XI (1947-8)	192-A
NOTES :	
IN MEMORIAM ... K. G. M.	185
THANKS ... K. G. M.	185
BOMBAY'S REPLY ... K. G. M.	185
NOTHING TO FIND FAULT WITH ... K. G. M.	185
NOT THE PRICE OF FREEDOM ... K. G. M.	185
THE YARN CONDITION ... K. G. M.	185
NO MARRIAGE WITHIN CASTE ... K. G. M.	186
HARIJAN EMPLOYEES' HOUSES ... P. M.	186
INVITATION FOR SERVICE JUGATRAM DAVE	186

Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, Navajivan Press, Kalupur, Ahmedabad.

Subscription Rates — INLAND : One year, Rs. 6 ; Six months, Rs. 3 ; FOREIGN : One year, Rs. 8 or 14 sh. or \$. 3 .